

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TORUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8336
INFO AMCONSUL IBADAN
AMCONSUL KADUNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, NI
SUBJECT: THE SITUATION STABILIZES

REF: LAGOS 5603

1. SUMMARY: THE SITUATION IN LAGOS CONTINUES
TO STABILIZE WITH A STRONG, LAW AND ORDER SPEECH
BY OBASANJO AND A RELATIVELY QUIET WEEKEND,
DESPITE RUMORS, IN LAGOS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE SITUATION IN LAGOS AND APPARENTLY ELSE-
WHERE IN THE COUNTRY CONTINUES TO BECOME MORE
STABLE. DESPITE THE USUAL SPATE OF RUMORS,
THERE WERE NO SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN LAGOS OVER THE
WEEKEND. HOWEVER, ARMED SOLDIERS ARE STILL
RIDING SHOTGUN ON LAGOS CITY BUSES AND TROOPS
WERE PRESENT ON THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS CAMPUS.
STUDENT LEADER SEGUN OKEOWO REMAINS IN JAIL
WITH A DATE TO APPEAR ON A WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS
IN THE HIGH COURT TODAY. AT THAT TIME, THE
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GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO JUSTIFY HIS CONTINUED
DETENTION.

3. THE GOVERNMENT'S DETERMINATION WAS EXPRESSED
IN A SPEECH BY FMG HEAD OF STATE OBASANJO WHICH
WAS DELIVERED BY CHIEF OF STAFF YAR'ADUA TO
MAY 4 MEETING OF THE VICE CHANCELLORS OF THE

COUNTRY'S UNIVERSITIES. IN THE ADDRESS, THE FMG SAID THAT "DESTRUCTIVE DEMONSTRATIONS AND PROTESTS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED AS PART OF STUDENT CULTURE AND A WAY OF LIFE EITHER IN OUR CAMPUSES OR OUTSIDE." IN PARTICULAR, OBASANJO OBSERVED:

"IT IS IMMORAL, WICKED AND CALLOUS TO THE EXTREME ON THE PART OF ANY NIGERIAN TO EMBARK ON INTIMIDATION, PHYSICAL ATTACK AND PLAIN THUGGERY TO FORCE OUT YOUNG AND INNOCENT TEN-YEAR-OLDS FROM PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO FACE POLICEMEN IN VERY LONG AND ARDUOUS DEMONSTRATIONS FOR WHICH THESE CHILDREN KNOW NOTHING.

"IT IS DISTRESSING THAT SOME PARENTS AND SOME TEACHERS HAVE ABANDONED THEIR OBLIGATIONS TO THEIR CHILDREN AND STUDENTS AT THE TIME WHEN THEY SHOULD BE IN CONTROL AND PREVENT ACTS OF LAWLESSNESS AND VANDALISM. LET US ALL ASSUME OUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR CHILDREN, WARDS AND STUDENTS. DISCIPLINE AND OBEDIENCE OF THE LAW MUST FORM THE BED-ROCK OF A WHOLESOME SOCIETY."

4. OBASANJO SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO HEAR LEGITIMATE GRIEVANCES FROM ALL CITIZENS; HOWEVER, IT WILL NOT ABDICATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR LAW AND ORDER. HE THANKED "RESPONSIBLE NIGERIANS INCLUDING TRADITIONAL RULERS, GOVERNMENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MENT FUNCTIONARIES, SOME UNIVERSITY AUTHORITIES, ASSOCIATIONS, AND OTHER BODIES" WHO HELPED BRING THE SITUATION BACK TO NORMAL. HE CONCLUDED WITH A CALL FOR THE VICE CHANCELLORS TO DISCUSS THE PROCESS OF REOPENING THE UNIVERSITIES BUT WARNED ABOUT THE DANGER OF STUDENTS WHO AS A MEANS OF PROTEST SOLICIT "THE HELP OF THUGS, LAYABOUTS AND ROBBERS."

5. AT THE CLOSE OF THEIR MEETINGS THE VICE CHANCELLORS RECOMMENDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUE THE INCREASED FEES, THAT IT SET UP AN INQUIRY INTO THE RECENT STUDENT UNREST AND THAT THE THREE UNIVERSITIES WHICH HAD BEEN CLOSED BY THE GOVERNMENT BE ALLOWED TO "DETERMINE WHEN CONDITIONS ARE RIGHT FOR THEM TO REOPEN AND PRESCRIBE THE TERMS UNDER WHICH STUDENTS MAY RETURN." THE GOVERNMENT ACCEPTED THE RECOMMENDATIONS.

6. IN RECOMMENDING THE CONTINUATION OF INCREASED FEES THE VICE CHANCELLORS NOTED THAT THE FMG

PAYS ONE NAIRA PER DAY FOR FEEDING EACH STUDENT AND THAT STUDENTS WERE PAYING ONLY FIFTY KOBO PER MEAL (U.S.\$.75) OR NAIRA 1.50 PER DAY. THEY ALSO NOTED THAT 70 PERCENT OF THE STUDENTS ARE ON SCHOLARSHIPS AND THAT THE FMG PAYS NAIRA 5,5760 PER STUDENT PER ANNUM.

7. COMMENT: THE GOVERNMENT HAS SUCCESSFULLY RELIED ON STRONG SPEECHES, POLICE COUNTERMEASURES AND THE FACT THAT UNIVERSITIES ARE CLOSED TO SUCCESSFULLY RIDE OUT THE STORM. IT HAS TAKEN ONLY ONE POSITIVE STEP TO AMELIORATE COMPLAINTS--DELAYING THE IMPOSITION OF INCREASED PAYMENTS TO THE NATIONAL PROVIDENT FUND. IN ADDITION TO THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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JUDICIOUS EXERCISE OF FORCE, THE FMG IS ALSO ATTEMPTING TO AVOID UNNECESSARY TROUBLE. FOR EXAMPLE, FEDERAL GOVERNMENT VEHICLES, THE SPECIAL TARGET OF RIOTERS, WERE BANNED FROM THE MAINLAND ON FRIDAY DURING THE MASS FUNERAL PROCESSION TO ABEOKUTA FOR THE LATE WOMAN ACTIVIST MRS. RANSOME-KUTI. WYMAN

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